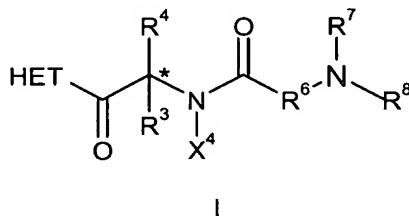


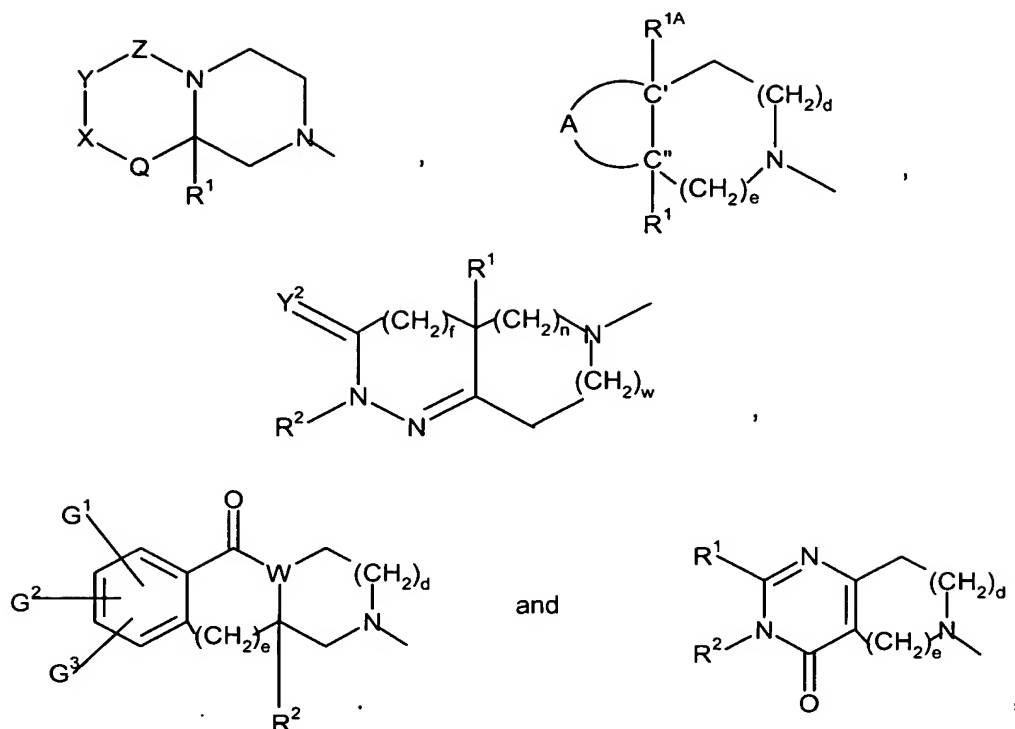
CLAIMS

1. A method for treating age-related decline in physical performance in an at-risk patient which comprises administering to the patient a performance enhancing effective amount of a growth hormone secretagogue.
2. A method of claim 1 wherein the growth hormone secretagogue is an orally active growth hormone secretagogue.
3. A method of claim 2 wherein the growth hormone secretagogue is orally administered.
4. A method of claim 1 wherein the growth hormone secretagogue is a non-peptidyl growth hormone secretagogue.
5. A method of claim 1 wherein the at-risk patient is a human.
6. A method of claim 5 wherein the human is an elderly or chronically ill individual.
7. A method of claim 1 wherein said growth hormone secretagogue is a compound of the Formula I:



- or a stereoisomeric mixture thereof, diastereomerically enriched, diastereomerically pure, enantiomerically enriched or enantiomerically pure isomer thereof, or a prodrug of such compound, mixture or isomer thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound, mixture, isomer or prodrug, or a tautomer thereof, wherein:

HET is a heterocyclic moiety selected from the group consisting of



d is 0, 1 or 2;

e is 1 or 2;

f is 0 or 1;

- 5 n and w are 0, 1 or 2, provided that n and w cannot both be 0 at the same time;
Y² is oxygen or sulfur;

A is a divalent radical, where the left hand side of the radical as shown below is connected to C'' and the right hand side of the radical as shown below is connected to C', selected from the group consisting of

- 10 -NR²-C(O)-NR²-, -NR²-S(O)₂-NR²-, -O-C(O)-NR²-, -NR²-C(O)-O-, -C(O)-NR²-C(O)-,
-C(O)-NR²-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-NR²-C(O)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-,
-S(O)₂-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-O-C(O)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-O-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-,
-NR²-C(O)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -O-C(O)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(O)-NR²-,
-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(O)-O-, -C(O)-NR²-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -C(O)-O-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-,
15 -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -S(O)₂-NR²-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-,
-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-NR²-C(O)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-O-C(O)-,
-NR²-C(O)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -NR²-S(O)₂-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-,
-O-C(O)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(O)-NR²-,
-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(O)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-NR²-C(O)-O-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-O-C(O)-NR²,

- C(R⁹R¹⁰)-NR²-C(O)-NR²-, -NR²-C(O)-O-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -NR²-C(O)-NR²-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -NR²-S(O)₂-NR²-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -O-C(O)-NR²-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -C(O)-N=C(R¹¹)-NR²-, -C(O)-NR²-C(R¹¹)=N-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-NR¹²-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -NR¹²-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -NR¹²-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -C(O)-O-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -NR²-C(R¹¹)=N-C(O)-,
- 5 -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-N(R¹²)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-NR¹²-, -N=C(R¹¹)-NR²-C(O)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-NR²-S(O)₂-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-S(O)₂-NR²-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(O)-O-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-S(O)₂-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-S(O)₂-, -O-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-O-, -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(O)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-, -C(O)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)-C(R⁹R¹⁰)- and -C(R⁹R¹⁰)-NR²-S(O)₂-NR²-;
- 10 Q is a covalent bond or CH₂;
W is CH or N;
X is CR⁹R¹⁰, C=CH₂ or C=O;
Y is CR⁹R¹⁰, O or NR²;
Z is C=O, C=S or S(O)₂;
- 15 G¹ is hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, nitro, amino, cyano, phenyl, carboxyl, -CONH₂, -(C₁-C₄)alkyl optionally independently substituted with one or more phenyl, one or more halogens or one or more hydroxy groups, -(C₁-C₄)alkoxy optionally independently substituted with one or more phenyl, one or more halogens or one or more hydroxy groups, -(C₁-C₄)alkylthio, phenoxy, -COO(C₁-C₄)alkyl, N,N-di-(C₁-C₄)alkylamino, -
- 20 (C₂-C₆)alkenyl optionally independently substituted with one or more phenyl, one or more halogens or one or more hydroxy groups, -(C₂-C₆)alkynyl optionally independently substituted with one or more phenyl, one or more halogens or one or more hydroxy groups, -(C₃-C₆)cycloalkyl optionally independently substituted with one or more (C₁-C₄)alkyl groups, one or more halogens or one or more hydroxy groups, -(C₁-C₄)alkylamino carbonyl or di-(C₁-C₄)alkylamino carbonyl;
- 25 G² and G³ are each independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halo, hydroxy, -(C₁-C₄)alkyl optionally independently substituted with one to three halo groups and -(C₁-C₄)alkoxy optionally independently substituted with one to three halo groups;
- 30 R¹ is hydrogen, -CN, -(CH₂)_qN(X⁶)C(O)X⁶, -(CH₂)_qN(X⁶)C(O)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qN(X⁶)S(O)₂(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qN(X⁶)S(O)₂X⁶, -(CH₂)_qN(X⁶)C(O)N(X⁶)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qN(X⁶)C(O)N(X⁶)(X⁶), -(CH₂)_qC(O)N(X⁶)(X⁶), -(CH₂)_qC(O)N(X⁶)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qC(O)OX⁶, -(CH₂)_qC(O)O(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qOX⁶, -(CH₂)_qOC(O)X⁶, -(CH₂)_qOC(O)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qOC(O)N(X⁶)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qOC(O)N(X⁶)(X⁶),

$-(CH_2)_qC(O)X^6$, $-(CH_2)_qC(O)(CH_2)_tA^1$, $-(CH_2)_qN(X^6)C(O)OX^6$,
 $-(CH_2)_qN(X^6)S(O)_2N(X^6)(X^6)$, $-(CH_2)_qS(O)_mX^6$, $-(CH_2)_qS(O)_m(CH_2)_tA^1$,
 $-(C_1-C_{10})alkyl$, $-(CH_2)_tA^1$, $-(CH_2)_q-(C_3-C_7)cycloalkyl$, $-(CH_2)_qY^1-(C_1-C_6)alkyl$,
 $-(CH_2)_qY^1-(CH_2)_tA^1$ or $-(CH_2)_qY^1-(CH_2)_t-(C_3-C_7)cycloalkyl$;

5 where the alkyl and cycloalkyl groups in the definition of R^1 are optionally substituted with $(C_1-C_4)alkyl$, hydroxy, $(C_1-C_4)alkoxy$, carboxyl, $-CONH_2$, $-S(O)_m(C_1-C_6)alkyl$, $-CO_2(C_1-C_4)alkyl$ ester, 1H-tetrazol-5-yl or 1, 2 or 3 fluoro groups;

Y^1 is O, $S(O)_m$, $-C(O)NX^6$, $-CH=CH-$, $-C\equiv C-$, $-N(X^6)C(O)-$, $-C(O)NX^6$,
10 $-C(O)O-$, $-OC(O)N(X^6)-$ or $-OC(O)-$;

q is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4;

t is 0, 1, 2 or 3;

said $(CH_2)_q$ group and $(CH_2)_t$ group in the definition of R^1 are optionally independently substituted with hydroxy, $(C_1-C_4)alkoxy$, carboxyl, $-CONH_2$,
15 $-S(O)_m(C_1-C_6)alkyl$, $-CO_2(C_1-C_4)alkyl$ ester, 1H-tetrazol-5-yl, 1, 2 or 3 fluoro groups or 1 or 2 $(C_1-C_4)alkyl$ groups;

R^{1A} is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, F, Cl, Br, I, $(C_1-C_6)alkyl$, phenyl $(C_1-C_3)alkyl$, pyridyl $(C_1-C_3)alkyl$, thiazolyl $(C_1-C_3)alkyl$ and thienyl $(C_1-C_3)alkyl$, provided that R^{1A} is not F, Cl, Br or I when a heteroatom is vicinal to C";

20 R^2 is hydrogen, $(C_1-C_8)alkyl$, $-(C_0-C_3)alkyl-(C_3-C_8)cycloalkyl$, $-(C_1-C_4)alkyl-A^1$ or A^1 ;
where the alkyl groups and the cycloalkyl groups in the definition of R^2 are optionally substituted with hydroxy, $-C(O)OX^6$, $-C(O)N(X^6)(X^6)$, $-N(X^6)(X^6)$, $-S(O)_m(C_1-C_6)alkyl$, $-C(O)A^1$, $-C(O)(X^6)$, CF_3 , CN or 1, 2 or 3 independently selected halo groups;

25 R^3 is selected from the group consisting of A^1 , $(C_1-C_{10})alkyl$, $-(C_1-C_6)alkyl-A^1$, $-(C_1-C_6)alkyl-(C_3-C_7)cycloalkyl$, $-(C_1-C_5)alkyl-X^1-(C_1-C_5)alkyl$, $-(C_1-C_5)alkyl-X^1-(C_0-C_5)alkyl-A^1$ and $-(C_1-C_5)alkyl-X^1-(C_1-C_5)alkyl-(C_3-C_7)cycloalkyl$;

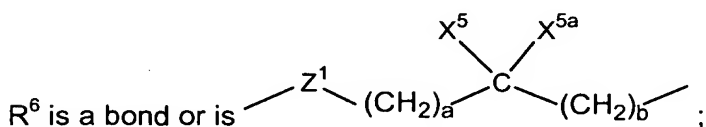
where the alkyl groups in the definition of R^3 are optionally substituted with $-S(O)_m(C_1-C_6)alkyl$, $-C(O)OX^3$, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 independently selected halo groups or 1, 2 or 3 independently selected $-OX^3$ groups;

30 X^1 is O, $S(O)_m$, $-N(X^2)C(O)-$, $-C(O)N(X^2)-$, $-OC(O)-$, $-C(O)O-$, $-CX^2=CX^2-$, $-N(X^2)C(O)O-$, $-OC(O)N(X^2)-$ or $-C\equiv C-$;

R^4 is hydrogen, $(C_1-C_6)alkyl$ or $(C_3-C_7)cycloalkyl$, or R^4 is taken together with R^3 and the carbon atom to which they are attached and form $(C_5-C_7)cycloalkyl$, $(C_5-$

C₇)cycloalkenyl, a partially saturated or fully saturated 4- to 8-membered ring having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of oxygen, sulfur and nitrogen, or is a bicyclic ring system consisting of a partially saturated or fully saturated 5- or 6-membered ring, fused to a partially saturated, fully unsaturated or fully saturated 5- or 6-membered ring, optionally having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur and oxygen;

X⁴ is hydrogen or (C₁-C₆)alkyl or X⁴ is taken together with R⁴ and the nitrogen atom to which X⁴ is attached and the carbon atom to which R⁴ is attached and form a five to seven membered ring;



where a and b are each independently 0, 1, 2 or 3;

X⁵ and X^{5a} are each independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, CF₃, A¹ and optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl;

the optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl in the definition of X⁵ and X^{5a} is optionally substituted with a substituent selected from the group consisting of A¹, OX², -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, -C(O)OX², (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl, -N(X²)(X²) and -C(O)N(X²)(X²);

or the carbon bearing X⁵ or X^{5a} forms one or two alkylene bridges with the nitrogen atom bearing R⁷ and R⁸ wherein each alkylene bridge contains 1 to 5 carbon atoms, provided that when one alkylene bridge is formed then only one of X⁵ or X^{5a} is on the carbon atom and only one of R⁷ or R⁸ is on the nitrogen atom and further provided that when two alkylene bridges are formed then X⁵ and X^{5a} cannot be on the carbon atom and R⁷ and R⁸ cannot be on the nitrogen atom;

or X⁵ is taken together with X^{5a} and the carbon atom to which they are attached and form a partially saturated or fully saturated 3- to 7-membered ring, or a partially saturated or fully saturated 4- to 8-membered ring having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of oxygen, sulfur and nitrogen;

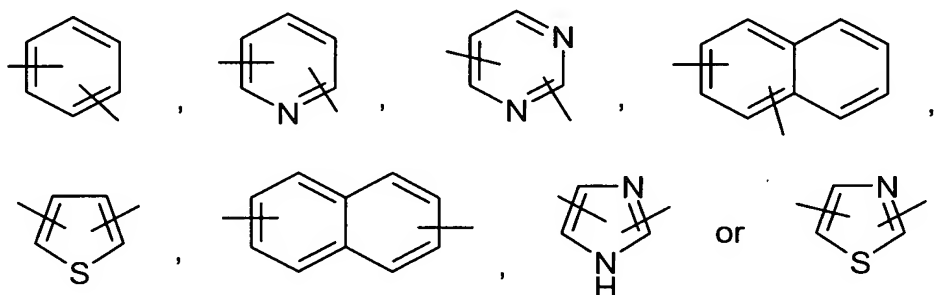
or X⁵ is taken together with X^{5a} and the carbon atom to which they are attached and form a bicyclic ring system consisting of a partially saturated

or fully saturated 5- or 6-membered ring, optionally having 1 or 2 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur and oxygen, fused to a partially saturated, fully saturated or fully unsaturated 5- or 6-membered ring, optionally having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur and oxygen;

Z^1 is a bond, O or $N-X^2$, provided that when a and b are both 0 then Z^1 is not $N-X^2$ or O;

or R^6 is $-(CR^aR^b)_a-E-(CR^aR^b)_b-$, where the $-(CR^aR^b)_a-$ group is attached to the carbonyl carbon of the amide group of the compound of formula I and the $-(CR^aR^b)_b$ group is attached to the terminal nitrogen atom of the compound of formula I;

E is -O-, -S-, -CH=CH- or an aromatic moiety selected from



said aromatic moiety in the definition of E optionally substituted with up to three halo, hydroxy, $-N(R^c)(R^c)$, (C_1-C_6) alkyl or (C_1-C_6) alkoxy;

R^a and R^b are, for each occurrence, independently hydrogen, (C_1-C_6) alkyl, trifluoromethyl, phenyl or monosubstituted (C_1-C_6) alkyl where the substituents are imidazolyl, naphthyl, phenyl, indolyl, p-hydroxyphenyl, $-OR^c$, $S(O)_mR^c$, $C(O)OR^c$, (C_3-C_7) cycloalkyl, $-N(R^c)(R^c)$, $-C(O)N(R^c)(R^c)$, or R^a or R^b may independently be joined to one or both of R^7 or E (where E is other than O, S or -CH=CH-) to form an alkylene bridge between the terminal nitrogen and the alkyl portion of the R^a or R^b and the R^7 or E group, wherein the bridge contains 1 to 8 carbon atoms; or R^a and R^b may be joined to one another to form a (C_3-C_7) cycloalkyl;

R^c , for each occurrence, is independently hydrogen or (C_1-C_6) alkyl;

a and b are independently 0, 1, 2 or 3, with the proviso that if E is -O- or

-S-, b is other than 0 or 1 and with the further proviso that if E is -CH=CH-, b is other than 0;

R⁷ and R⁸ are each independently hydrogen or optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl;
where the optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl in the definition of R⁷ and R⁸ is
5 optionally independently substituted with A¹, -C(O)O-(C₁-C₆)alkyl,
-S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, 1 to 5 halo groups, 1 to 3 hydroxy groups, 1 to 3
-O-C(O)(C₁-C₁₀)alkyl groups or 1 to 3 (C₁-C₆)alkoxy groups; or

R⁷ and R⁸ can be taken together to form -(CH₂)_r-L-(CH₂)_r;

where L is C(X²)(X²), S(O)_m or N(X²);

10 R⁹ and R¹⁰ are each independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen,
fluoro, hydroxy and (C₁-C₅)alkyl optionally independently substituted with 1-5 halo
groups;

R¹¹ is selected from the group consisting of (C₁-C₅)alkyl and phenyl optionally
substituted with 1-3 substituents each independently selected from the group
15 consisting of (C₁-C₅)alkyl, halo and (C₁-C₅)alkoxy;

R¹² is selected from the group consisting of (C₁-C₅)alkylsulfonyl, (C₁-C₅)alkanoyl
and (C₁-C₅)alkyl where the alkyl portion is optionally independently substituted by 1-
5 halo groups;

A¹ for each occurrence is independently selected from the group consisting of (C₅-
20 C₇)cycloalkenyl, phenyl, a partially saturated, fully saturated or fully unsaturated 4-
to 8-membered ring optionally having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected
from the group consisting of oxygen, sulfur and nitrogen and a bicyclic ring system
consisting of a partially saturated, fully unsaturated or fully saturated 5- or 6-
membered ring, optionally having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from
25 the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur and oxygen, fused to a partially saturated,
fully saturated or fully unsaturated 5- or 6-membered ring, optionally having 1 to 4
heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur
and oxygen;

A¹ for each occurrence is independently optionally substituted, on one or
30 optionally both rings if A¹ is a bicyclic ring system, with up to three
substituents, each substituent independently selected from the group
consisting of F, Cl, Br, I, OCF₃, OCF₂H, CF₃, CH₃, OCH₃, -OX⁶,

- C(O)N(X⁶)(X⁶), -C(O)OX⁶, oxo, (C₁-C₆)alkyl, nitro, cyano, benzyl, -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, 1H-tetrazol-5-yl, phenyl, phenoxy, phenylalkyloxy, halophenyl, methylenedioxy, -N(X⁶)(X⁶), -N(X⁶)C(O)(X⁶), -S(O)₂N(X⁶)(X⁶), -N(X⁶)S(O)₂-phenyl, -N(X⁶)S(O)₂X⁶, -CONX¹¹X¹², -S(O)₂NX¹¹X¹², -NX⁶S(O)₂X¹², -NX⁶CONX¹¹X¹², -NX⁶S(O)₂NX¹¹X¹², -NX⁶C(O)X¹², imidazolyl, thiazolyl and tetrazolyl, provided that if A¹ is optionally substituted with methylenedioxy then it can only be substituted with one methylenedioxy;
- where X¹¹ is hydrogen or optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl;
- the optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl defined for X¹¹ is optionally independently substituted with phenyl, phenoxy, (C₁-C₆)alkoxycarbonyl, -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, 1 to 5 halo groups, 1 to 3 hydroxy groups, 1 to 3 (C₁-C₁₀)alkanoyloxy groups or 1 to 3 (C₁-C₆)alkoxy groups;
- X¹² is hydrogen, (C₁-C₆)alkyl, phenyl, thiazolyl, imidazolyl, furyl or thienyl, provided that when X¹² is not hydrogen, the X¹² group is optionally substituted with one to three substituents independently selected from the group consisting of Cl, F, CH₃, OCH₃, OCF₃ and CF₃;
- or X¹¹ and X¹² are taken together to form -(CH₂)_r-L¹-(CH₂)_r-;
- L¹ is C(X²)(X²), O, S(O)_m or N(X²);
- r for each occurrence is independently 1, 2 or 3;
- X² for each occurrence is independently hydrogen, optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl or optionally substituted (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl, where the optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl and optionally substituted (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl in the definition of X² are optionally independently substituted with -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, -C(O)OX³, 1 to 5 halo groups or 1-3 OX³ groups;
- X³ for each occurrence is independently hydrogen or (C₁-C₆)alkyl;
- X⁶ for each occurrence is independently hydrogen, optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl, (C₂-C₆)halogenated alkyl, optionally substituted (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl, (C₃-C₇)halogenated cycloalkyl, where optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl and optionally substituted (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl in the definition of X⁶ is optionally independently mono- or di-substituted with (C₁-C₄)alkyl, hydroxy, (C₁-C₄)alkoxy, carboxyl, CONH₂, -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, carboxylate (C₁-C₄)alkyl ester or 1H-tetrazol-5-yl; or

when there are two X^6 groups on one atom and both X^6 are independently (C₁-C₆)alkyl, the two (C₁-C₆)alkyl groups may be optionally joined and, together with the atom to which the two X^6 groups are attached, form a 4- to 9- membered ring optionally having oxygen, sulfur or NX⁷ as a ring member;

5 X^7 is hydrogen or (C₁-C₆)alkyl optionally substituted with hydroxy;

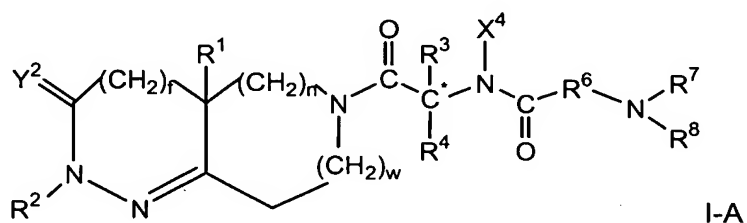
m for each occurrence is independently 0, 1 or 2;

with the provisos that:

1) X^6 and X^{12} cannot be hydrogen when attached to C(O) or S(O)₂ in the form C(O) X^6 , C(O) X^{12} , S(O)₂ X^6 or S(O)₂ X^{12} ; and

10 2) when R⁶ is a bond then L is N(X^2) and each r in the definition -(CH₂)_r-L-(CH₂)_r- is independently 2 or 3.

8. A method of claim 7 wherein the growth hormone secretagogue is a compound of Formula I-A



15 a racemic-diastereomeric mixture or an optical isomer of said compound or a pharmaceutically-acceptable salt or a prodrug thereof, or a tautomer thereof, wherein

f is 0;

n is 0 and w is 2, or n is 1 and w is 1, or n is 2 and w is 0;

20 Y is oxygen or sulfur;

R¹ is hydrogen, -CN, -(CH₂)_qN(X^6)C(O) X^6 , -(CH₂)_qN(X^6)C(O)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qN(X^6)SO₂(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qN(X^6)SO₂ X^6 , -(CH₂)_qN(X^6)C(O)N(X^6)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qN(X^6)C(O)N(X^6)(X^6), -(CH₂)_qC(O)N(X^6)(X^6), -(CH₂)_qC(O)N(X^6)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qC(O)OX⁶, -(CH₂)_qC(O)O(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qOX⁶, -(CH₂)_qOC(O) X^6 , -(CH₂)_qOC(O)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qOC(O)N(X^6)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qOC(O)N(X^6)(X^6), -(CH₂)_qC(O) X^6 , -(CH₂)_qC(O)(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_qN(X^6)C(O)OX⁶, -(CH₂)_qN(X^6)SO₂N(X^6)(X^6), -(CH₂)_qS(O)_m X^6 , -(CH₂)_qS(O)_m(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(C₁-C₁₀)alkyl, -(CH₂)_t-A¹, -(CH₂)_q-(C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl, -(CH₂)_q-Y¹-(C₁-C₆)alkyl, -(CH₂)_q-Y¹-(CH₂)_t-A¹ or -(CH₂)_q-Y¹-(CH₂)_t-(C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl;

where the alkyl and cycloalkyl groups in the definition of R^1 are optionally substituted with (C₁-C₄)alkyl, hydroxyl, (C₁-C₄)alkoxy, carboxyl, -CONH₂, -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, -CO₂(C₁-C₄)alkyl ester, 1H-tetrazol-5-yl or 1, 2 or 3 fluoro;

5 Y^1 is O, S(O)_m, -C(O)NX⁶-, -CH=CH-, -C≡C-, -N(X⁶)C(O)-, -C(O)O-, -OC(O)N(X⁶)- or -OC(O)-;

q is 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4;

t is 0, 1, 2 or 3;

10 said (CH₂)_q group and (CH₂)_t group may each be optionally substituted with hydroxyl, (C₁-C₄)alkoxy, carboxyl, -CONH₂, -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, -CO₂(C₁-C₄)alkyl ester, 1H-tetrazol-5-yl, 1, 2 or 3 fluoro, or 1 or 2 (C₁-C₄)alkyl;

R^2 is hydrogen, (C₁-C₈)alkyl, -(C₀-C₃)alkyl-(C₃-C₈)cycloalkyl, -(C₁-C₄)alkyl-A¹ or A¹;

15 where the alkyl groups and the cycloalkyl groups in the definition of R^2 are optionally substituted with hydroxyl, -C(O)OX⁶, -C(O)N(X⁶)(X⁶), -N(X⁶)(X⁶), -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, -C(O)A¹, -C(O)(X⁶), CF₃, CN or 1, 2 or 3 halogen;

R^3 is A¹, (C₁-C₁₀)alkyl, -(C₁-C₆)alkyl-A¹, -(C₁-C₆)alkyl-(C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl, -(C₁-C₅)alkyl-X¹-(C₁-C₅)alkyl, -(C₁-C₅)alkyl-X¹-(C₀-C₅)alkyl-A¹ or

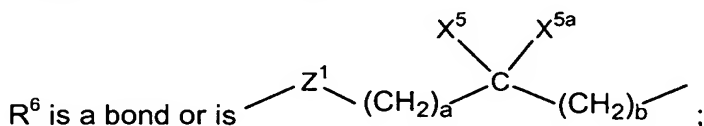
20 -(C₁-C₅)alkyl-X¹-(C₁-C₅)alkyl-(C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl;

where the alkyl groups in the definition of R^3 are optionally substituted with, -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, -C(O)OX³, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 halogens, or 1, 2 or 3 OX³;

X^1 is O, S(O)_m, -N(X²)C(O)-, -C(O)N(X²)-, -OC(O)-, -C(O)O-, -CX²=CX²-, -N(X²)C(O)O-, -OC(O)N(X²)- or -C≡C-;

25 R^4 is hydrogen, (C₁-C₆)alkyl or (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl;

X^4 is hydrogen or (C₁-C₆)alkyl or X^4 is taken together with R^4 and the nitrogen atom to which X^4 is attached and the carbon atom to which R^4 is attached and form a five to seven membered ring;



30 where a and b are independently 0, 1, 2 or 3;

X^5 and X^{5a} are each independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, trifluoromethyl, A¹ and optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl;

the optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl in the definition of X⁵ and X^{5a} is optionally substituted with a substituent selected from the group consisting of A¹, OX², -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, -C(O)OX², (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl, -N(X²)(X²) and -C(O)N(X²)(X²);

5 R⁷ and R⁸ are independently hydrogen or optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl; where the optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl in the definition of R⁷ and R⁸ is optionally independently substituted with A¹, -C(O)O-(C₁-C₆)alkyl, -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, 1 to 5 halogens, 1 to 3 hydroxy, 1 to 3 -O-C(O)(C₁-C₁₀)alkyl or 1 to 3 (C₁-C₆)alkoxy; or

10 R⁷ and R⁸ can be taken together to form -(CH₂)_r-L-(CH₂)_r;
where L is C(X²)(X²), S(O)_m or N(X²);

A¹ in the definition of R¹ is a partially saturated, fully saturated or fully unsaturated 4- to 8-membered ring optionally having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of oxygen, sulfur and nitrogen, a bicyclic ring system
15 consisting of a partially saturated, fully unsaturated or fully saturated 5- or 6-membered ring, having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur and oxygen, fused to a partially saturated, fully saturated or fully unsaturated 5- or 6-membered ring, optionally having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur
20 and oxygen;

A¹ in the definition of R², R³, R⁶, R⁷ and R⁸ is independently (C₅-C₇)cycloalkenyl, phenyl or a partially saturated, fully saturated or fully unsaturated 4- to 8-membered ring optionally having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of oxygen, sulfur and nitrogen, a bicyclic ring system
25 consisting of a partially saturated, fully unsaturated or fully saturated 5- or 6-membered ring, optionally having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur and oxygen, fused to a partially saturated, fully saturated or fully unsaturated 5- or 6-membered ring, optionally having 1 to 4 heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur
30 and oxygen;

A¹ for each occurrence is independently optionally substituted, in one or optionally both rings if A¹ is a bicyclic ring system, with up to three substituents, each substituent independently selected from the group consisting of F, Cl, Br, I, OCF₃, OCF₂H, CF₃, CH₃, OCH₃, -OX⁶,

-C(O)N(X⁶)(X⁶), -C(O)OX⁶, oxo, (C₁-C₆)alkyl, nitro, cyano, benzyl,
 -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, 1H-tetrazol-5-yl, phenyl, phenoxy, phenylalkyloxy,
 halophenyl, methylenedioxy, -N(X⁶)(X⁶), -N(X⁶)C(O)(X⁶), -SO₂N(X⁶)(X⁶),
 -N(X⁶)SO₂-phenyl, -N(X⁶)SO₂X⁶, -CONX¹¹X¹², -SO₂NX¹¹X¹², -NX⁶SO₂X¹²,
 5 -NX⁶CONX¹¹X¹², -NX⁶SO₂NX¹¹X¹², -NX⁶C(O)X¹², imidazolyl, thiazolyl or
 tetrazolyl, provided that if A¹ is optionally substituted with methylenedioxy
 then it can only be substituted with one methylenedioxy;

where X¹¹ is hydrogen or optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl;

10 the optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl defined for X¹¹ is
 optionally independently substituted with phenyl, phenoxy,
 (C₁-C₆)alkoxycarbonyl, -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl 1 to 5 halogens, 1
 to 3 hydroxy, 1 to 3 (C₁-C₁₀)alkanoyloxy or 1 to 3 (C₁-
 C₆)alkoxy;

15 X¹² is hydrogen, (C₁-C₆)alkyl, phenyl, thiazolyl, imidazolyl, furyl or
 thienyl, provided that when X¹² is not hydrogen, X¹² is optionally
 substituted with one to three substituents independently selected
 from the group consisting of Cl, F, CH₃, OCH₃, OCF₃ and CF₃;

or X¹¹ and X¹² are taken together to form -(CH₂)_r-L¹-(CH₂)_r;

where L¹ is C(X²)(X²), O, S(O)_m or N(X²);

20 r for each occurrence is independently 1, 2 or 3;

X² for each occurrence is independently hydrogen, optionally substituted (C₁-
 C₆)alkyl, or optionally substituted (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl, where the optionally substituted
 (C₁-C₆)alkyl and optionally substituted (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl in the definition of X² are
 optionally independently substituted with -S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, -C(O)OX³, 1 to 5
 25 halogens or 1-3 OX³;

X³ for each occurrence is independently hydrogen or (C₁-C₆)alkyl;

30 X⁶ is independently hydrogen, optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl, (C₂-
 C₆)halogenated alkyl, optionally substituted (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl, (C₃-C₇)-
 halogenatedcycloalkyl, where optionally substituted (C₁-C₆)alkyl and optionally
 substituted (C₃-C₇)cycloalkyl in the definition of X⁶ is optionally independently
 substituted by 1 or 2 (C₁-C₄)alkyl, hydroxyl, (C₁-C₄)alkoxy, carboxyl, CONH₂, -
 S(O)_m(C₁-C₆)alkyl, carboxylate (C₁-C₄)alkyl ester, or 1H-tetrazol-5-yl; or
 when there are two X⁶ groups on one atom and both X⁶ are independently (C₁-
 C₆)alkyl, the two (C₁-C₆)alkyl groups may be optionally joined and, together with the

atom to which the two X^6 groups are attached, form a 4- to 9- membered ring optionally having oxygen, sulfur or NX^7 ;

X^7 is hydrogen or (C_1-C_6) alkyl optionally substituted with hydroxyl; and

m for each occurrence is independently 0, 1 or 2;

5 with the proviso that:

X^6 and X^{12} cannot be hydrogen when it is attached to $C(O)$ or SO_2 in the form $C(O)X^6$, $C(O)X^{12}$, SO_2X^6 or SO_2X^{12} ; and

when R^6 is a bond then L is $N(X^2)$ and each r in the definition $-(CH_2)_r-L-(CH_2)_r-$ is independently 2 or 3.

10 9. A method of claim 8 wherein the growth hormone secretagogue is 2-amino-N-(2-(3a-(R)-benzyl-2-methyl-3-oxo-2,3,3a,4,6,7-hexahydro-pyrazolo-[4,3-c]pyridin-5-yl)-1-(R)-benzyloxymethyl-2-oxo-ethyl)-isobutyramide, a prodrug thereof or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of said growth hormone secretagogue or said prodrug.

15 10. A method of claim 9 wherein the growth hormone secretagogue is 2-amino-N-[2-(3a-(R)-benzyl-2-methyl-3-oxo-2,3,3a,4,6,7-hexahydro-pyrazolo[4,3-c]pyridin-5-yl)-1-(R)-benzyloxymethyl-2-oxo-ethyl]-isobutyramide, L-tartrate.

20 11. A method of claim 8 wherein the growth hormone secretagogue is 2-amino-N-(1-(R)-(2,4-difluoro-benzyloxymethyl)-2-oxo-2-(3-oxo-3a-(R)-pyridin-2-ylmethyl-2-(2,2,2-trifluoro-ethyl)-2,3,3a,4,6,7-hexahydro-pyrazolo-[4,3-c]pyridin-5-yl)-ethyl)-2-methyl-propionamide, a prodrug thereof or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of said growth hormone secretagogue or said prodrug.

25 12. A method of claim 11 wherein the growth hormone secretagogue is the (L)-(+)-tartaric acid salt of 2-amino-N-(1-(R)-(2,4-difluoro-benzyloxymethyl)-2-oxo-2-(3-oxo-3a-(R)-pyridin-2-ylmethyl-2-(2,2,2-trifluoro-ethyl)-2,3,3a,4,6,7-hexahydro-pyrazolo-[4,3-c]pyridin-5-yl)-ethyl)-2-methyl-propionamide.

30 13. A method of claim 7 wherein the growth hormone secretagogue is 2-amino-N-{1(R)-benzyloxymethyl-2-[1,3-dioxo-8a(S)-pyridin-2-ylmethyl-2-(2,2,2-trifluoro-ethyl)-hexahydro-imidazo[1,5-a]pyrazin-7-yl]-2-oxo-ethyl}-2-methyl-propionamide, a prodrug thereof or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of said growth hormone secretagogue or said prodrug.

14. A method of claim 13 wherein the growth hormone secretagogue is the (L)-(+)-tartaric acid salt of 2-amino-N-(1(R)-benzyloxymethyl-2-(1,3-dioxo-

8a(S)-pyridin-2-ylmethyl-2-(2,2,2-trifluoro-ethyl)-hexahydro-imidazo[1,5-a]pyrazin-7-yl)-2-oxo-ethyl)-2-methyl-propionamide.

15. A method of claim 7 which further comprises administering recombinant growth hormone or a growth hormone secretagogue selected from the group consisting of GHRP-6, GHRP-1, GHRP-2, hexarelin, growth hormone releasing factor, an analog of growth hormone releasing factor, IGF-I and IGF-II.

16. A method of claim 7 which further comprises administering arginine, insulin or L-dopa together with propranolol.